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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

REVIEW OF REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF AFFECTED AFRICAN COUNTRY PARTIES, INCLUDING ON THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS AND ON EXPERIENCES GAINED AND RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES

Addendum

SYNTHESIS OF INFORMATION CONTAINED IN NATIONAL REPORTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its decision 5/COP.2, the Conference of the Parties (COP) reaffirmed decision 11/COP.1 on procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation, and thus requested the secretariat to prepare a synthesis (decision 11/COP.1, paragraph 17) based on the information contained in national reports, to be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its third session (COP 3). In accordance with decision 5/COP.2, paragraph 1, the reports of African country Parties only are to be considered at COP 3.

2. Decision 11/COP.1 provided the guidelines and procedures for organizing and streamlining the communication of information pursuant to article 26 of the Convention, in order to facilitate the review of implementation by the Conference of the Parties in accordance with article 22, paragraph 2(a) and 2(b) of the Convention. The objectives of the procedures include:

(a) To ensure the effective assessment of progress towards achieving the objectives of the Convention and to enable the Conference of the Parties to make appropriate recommendations to further those objectives;

(b) To exchange information and data among Parties in order to maximize the benefits of successful measures and initiatives under the Convention;

(c) To ensure that the Committee on Science and Technology and the Global Mechanism have access to the information and data necessary to carry out their mandates;

(d) To ensure that information on implementation is in the public domain and available to the international community, particularly intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties.

3. Decision 11/COP.1, paragraph 3, states that each Party shall communicate to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its ordinary sessions, through the secretariat, reports on the measures which it has taken for the implementation of the Convention.

4. Paragraph 4 states that affected country Parties shall provide a description of the strategies established pursuant to article 5 of the Convention and any relevant information on their implementation.

5. Paragraph 5 provides that affected country Parties which implement action programmes pursuant to articles 9 to 15 of the Convention shall provide a detailed description of the programmes and their implementation.

6. Paragraph 10 specifies the format and content of the national reports, under nine chapter headings (see annex I). The UNCCD secretariat has prepared, in collaboration with several United Nations agencies and African subregional

organizations, a Help Guide based on the contents of decision 11/COP.1, paragraph 10(a). The Help Guide was designed to provide a common format, practical recommendations and support for preparation of the national reports (see ICCD/COP(3)/INF.3).

7. Section II of this note provides a general recapitulation of the national reports received by the secretariat by the agreed deadline of 31 May 1999 and up to the first week of July 1999.

8. The information contained in section III is a synthesis of the national reports, grouped into subsections in accordance with the table of contents of national reports provided for in decision 11/COP.1, paragraph 10(a), and as elaborated on in the Help Guide.

9. Section IV presents the lessons learned and challenges encountered in the formulation and implementation of national action programmes (NAPs), especially pursuant to the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa, articles 6 to 9. Two issues, among others, stand out as key challenges, namely, attracting developed country Parties to form substantive and long-lasting partnerships in the implementation of the national action programmes; and the opportunities for synergy in the implementation at national and community level, of the three Rio conventions on biological diversity, climate change and desertification.

10. Section V summarizes the key recommendations on the content and process of national reporting under the Convention.

II. NATIONAL REPORTS RECEIVED

11. Although the deadline set for submitting national reports was 31 May 1999, some reports were received into the first week of July. A total of 39 reports were received (75 per cent of the Africa region). Eighteen of the reports were in French, nineteen in English and two in Arabic. This note was prepared on the basis of the information contained in the national reports. Three reports were presented in summary or interim format, without stating whether final reports will be submitted later. In order to ensure that the reports are widely accessible, the secretariat will make available on the Convention's Web site (www.unccd.de) those reports submitted in electronic form.

12. The format and content of the reports are standardized according to decision 11/COP.1 and Help Guide. The Help Guide sets a limit of 30 pages for reports, and all Parties which submitted full reports respected this limit. However, in content and style of presentation, the reports still present a diverse approach.

13. The Parties whose reports formed the basis of this note are listed in annex II.

III. SYNTHESIS OF INFORMATION CONTAINED IN NATIONAL REPORTS

14. Most reports presented mainly factual information while some provided critical and evaluative analysis. There is, however, sufficient basis to draw conclusions on emerging trends on the implementation of the Convention at the national level. It should be pointed out that the synthesis report might not reflect all the richness and detail of the individual reports and therefore Parties are invited to look at the individual reports in detail.

15. Summaries of national reports are contained in documents ICCD/COP(3)/5/Add.2 (A), (B), (C), (D) and (E).

16. One of the conclusions that can be drawn from the reports is that African country Parties are committed to the implementation of the Convention and regard the Convention as a vehicle for proper management of natural resources for sustainable development. The Convention has helped Parties to refocus ongoing policies, strategies and action programmes and has added value to environment and natural resources management activities towards achieving sustainable development. In this regard the reports show that:

(a) African country Parties are definitely engaged in the process of preparation and implementation of national action programmes and are basically allocating resources to support the process according to their abilities;

(b) Significant reforms in institutional arrangements and legislative measures are being made in most countries to integrate the provisions of the Convention into sectoral activities as called for in the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa, article 6;

(c) There are continuing requests by African country Parties for financial and technical assistance to formulate and implement programmes and projects from the NAP priority areas at national and local community levels;

(d) The phenomenon of recurrent droughts and desertification constitutes a threat to the livelihoods of millions of people in Africa who depend on the land for most of their needs. The reports indicate that a high percentage of national land area is affected by land degradation and desertification, even in countries outside the Sudano-Sahelian and Kalahari-Namib arid and semi-arid zones.

A. Strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies

17. Parties were requested through the Help Guide to provide information on national plans and strategies available in other social and economic areas which have relevance to combating desertification, such as national development plans and national environmental strategies and on national plans and strategies in the field of combating desertification developed prior to the UNCCD including national and

local Agendas 21 and national conservation strategies. Other relevant plans or strategies, especially sectoral ones, were also to be reported on.

18. The reports present information on various strategies and plans that are relevant to environmental management, including the combat against desertification. The national constitutions of several countries have articles which vest responsibility in the State to regulate all land, water and natural resources and to ensure their management in a balanced and sustainable manner in the interest of the present and future generations.

19. Of the plans and strategies available to combat desertification, the national development plans are cited as important policy instruments as they always include provisions for environmental management. The reports show that there is a definite trend for national development plans formulated after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio Earth Summit) to address issues of land degradation more directly and effectively than before.

20. All reports show that the countries have formulated environmental policies, strategies and action plans to address the many problems associated with desertification and drought. National conservation strategies, national environmental (management) policies or national environmental action plans have been formulated and in most cases and are being implemented. Most Parties have been gathering experience in the field of national conservation strategies and environmental action plans during the past few decades, and promise to review, enhance and optimize them. NAPs are being formulated in the context of these conservation strategies and action plans.

21. A plethora of sectoral policies, strategies and action programmes is presented in each country report, ranging from agriculture and livestock development to conservation of water and soil management, forestry, energy, land, wildlife, population, poverty alleviation, disaster management, education and tourism. The reports did not mention any policies and strategies to deal with the problems of refugees or land mines, both of which impact on land degradation and land use in the countries experiencing internal and cross-border conflicts.

22. Some observations about the sectoral policies and programmes are necessary: Firstly, some of these new policies and legislations are subsequent to the entry into force of the UNCCD and one can deduce that they are a direct effort to combat desertification; secondly, the land reforms and legislations are significant in the sense that they are strengthening the basis for sustainable land management by stabilizing land tenure and access to land, and enshrining the right of women to own land; thirdly, the various policies are mutually supportive in preventing and/or reversing land degradation.

23. National and local Agendas 21 are mentioned in most of the reports, and national biodiversity strategies and action plans as well as climate change projects, in some of the reports. In most cases the same ministry coordinating the

NAP process, usually the ministry of the environment, is also dealing with biodiversity and climate change issues. But only some of the reports indicated the practice of coordinating action programmes among the three conventions. A comment in one of the reports, talking about the policy of integrating biodiversity issues into development planning, recommends that this policy be more concretized, taking into account the role biodiversity can play in combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, and that detailed strategies for its implementation be formulated. The need for synergy in implementing the three conventions at the national and community level cannot be overemphasized, for it is at the local level that local development programmes under the NAP can provide the framework to achieve it.

24. Decentralization is mentioned in many of the reports as a strategy needed for empowering local communities to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner. Most Parties state that they are encouraging decentralized systems of government.

25. Sudano-Sahelian countries affected by the 1972/73 severe drought have continued to make specific plans and strategies to address desertification and were inspired by the United Nations Conference on Desertification (Nairobi, 1977). The few other reports that make reference to the same conference state that they did not make specific plans or strategies on desertification after the conference. No reasons are given. The other countries started in the 1980s and 1990s to consider questions of combating desertification and sustainable management in plans and programmes at sectoral and national level.

B. Institutional measures taken to implement the Convention

26. On the establishment and functioning of the UNCCD national coordinating body (NCB), the reports were expected to provide information on the legal status, intersectoral and multi-disciplinary character of the NCB, its composition and mode of operation, and on status of information and data.

27. Except for three reports, which do not confirm clearly the existence of a national coordinating body, all the reports indicate that a government ministry or environmental body has been designated as national focal point for coordinating the implementation of the UNCCD. In all cases a national steering committee or task force has been set up as the policy-making body with multisectoral representation from the key government ministries, institutions of higher learning and research, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), private sector and donor community.

28. Most of the national steering committees are under ministries in charge of the environment or agriculture, a few under the prime minister's or vice-president's office and most of them have been created by ministerial decree and by nomination. The representatives are senior, experienced people trained in natural resources management. Most reports state that the NCB has no independent legal status but derives its authority from that of the ministry in which it is based. A few of the

reports state that this situation is under review. One report emphasizes the fact that the NCB and its work is the domain of the State and that cooperating partners from local or civil society are limited to "their specific prerogatives." Similarly most reports state that the NCB has no financial autonomy, is funded from the ministry allocations and is dependent on donor funds. Most reports give a clear summary of the donor funds on which the NAP process has been developed.

29. The functions and mandate of the NCBs are usually specified in the terms of reference establishing the NCB and are specific to the intersectoral coordination as well as the elaboration, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the NAP.

30. Within the NCB there is usually a national focal point person who is normally in charge of a small technical secretariat which works with a technical committee and in some countries there are task force or working group subcommittees. Most reports state that human resources and expertise at the NAP secretariat and the technical committee need strengthening to meet the increasing challenges of NAP implementation. One report admits that they have not yet worked out the integration of the national focal point into the national environmental institutional framework, and that the national focal point is not functional due to severe lack of funds and lack of terms of reference.

31. Communication or networking among members of the NCB is reported to be through staff meetings where they report on activities of their organizations; circulation of proceedings of meetings, workshops, seminars, site visits to projects supported by the committee or the NCB; and, in some instances the more effective, face-to-face consultations. Electronic communication and networking are being developed, although still not well established in most countries.

32. The composition and mode of operation of the NCB is similar in the reports. Member institutions are identified by the steering committee and they in turn nominate their representatives to the steering committee. At least ten reports dealt with the composition of the NCB in detail and only three gave figures. In one report the NCB is composed of 25 members; 9 are female, the rest are male and 11 of these are from government departments. In another report the ratio of female representatives to male is 3 to 10 while that of government to civil society is 7 to 10. Another report has 68 per cent government representatives and the rest from the private sector, NGOs and academic institutions, and 27 per cent of the committee are women. Some reports state that efforts are under way to include more women representatives in the NCBs.

33. Concerning the mode of operation, in five countries the NCB is composed of a permanent executive structure reporting to a consultative non-permanent structure in which intersectoral representation is larger. Two reports state that the NCB is represented by a structure within a ministry, without mentioning other structures.

34. According to the reports, members of the steering committee and other NCB organs have been trained and sensitized and they in turn sensitize and inform their departments and organizations on their roles in conducting and participating in the NAP process.

35. Most of the reports indicate that the NCB and its organs meet according to the work plan and timetable as set in their programme of work under their terms of reference. In some countries there is an annual programme of work for the NCB.

36. Invariably the reports state that the NCB has no budget of its own, and this is a major limitation. Most NCBs depend on the budget allocations made by the ministry which hosts the NCB and they cover salaries of functionaries, office space, equipment, travel and running costs. The reports show big differences among the countries in these budget allocations. These allocations are inadequate, but in most cases cooperating partners supplemented them, especially during the preparatory phase of the NAP. Five of the reports express concern that they have not been able to complete their NAP preparatory phase, especially the consultative process, partly because of lack of funding.

37. Although half of the reports do not report explicitly on the status of information and data, the emerging trend is that most of the NCBs do not have their own information system or databases. But it is reported that a number of databases do exist in the countries at relevant institutions and are accessible to the NCB members. These databases contain national and subnational level information on climate, vegetation, soils, geology and drainage, agriculture and land use, human and livestock populations, forests and wildlife, to mention but a few. Some countries have put some of the drought and land degradation data from each sector on the Internet, while a few countries are assisting their NCBs to create inventories of all existing national databases relevant to drought and desertification. Only three Parties reported that they have established a programme on desertification information sharing systems (DIS) while the majority of the rest are establishing programmes in environmental information systems (EIS) which might include DIS.

38. The reports do mention that the information exchanged in support of the NAP by the NCB is basically about their work, reports and resource papers done by them or on their behalf. In some countries the limited availability of computers makes internal information exchange difficult. Most NAP focal point offices have access to E-mail and Internet and this makes external communication easier and cheaper.

39. With regard to institutional, legislative and regulative frameworks, the reports indicate that reviews were made to adapt and strengthen existing regulations. Some of the reports state that because of a recent national constitution or a recent environmental law and organization, the institutional framework for functional desertification control needs no review. In the majority of the reports, however, efforts are at various levels of reviewing and analysing the different, largely sectoral, laws and institutions in order to recommend

mechanisms suitable for coordinating and harmonizing actions to combat land degradation. Some of the recommended institutional and organizational measures were discussed at the first national forum in most countries. Recommendations were made and are yet to be implemented. One report states that "no formal review of mechanisms for coordination and harmonization of actions to combat land degradation at national and local level has been undertaken" and no reasons are given.

40. One report proposes using the existing decentralized institutional structure of the environmental protection agency, hence there is no need for reviews. Yet another report admits that the national institutional framework is entirely inadequate to effectively support the implementation of the convention and could not be reviewed so far due to lack of funding. The country also expresses concern that it is not a member of a subregional organization and thus misses support in this respect.

41. A few reports seem to have understood the question of capacity and institution building in the context of the "urgent action for Africa" awareness-raising campaigns, while others have reported that administrative changes and a decentralized approach to development planning have made it possible for local communities to participate in combating desertification. Three reports state that the issue is one of the priorities in the NAP implementation process proposed, and another state that a capacity-building programme for the focal point is under implementation. The majority of the reports give no information on the subject.

42. Some reports give a detailed overview of the institutions which form the framework at national level and which are closely collaborating with the NCB.

43. A good number of reports state that there is a clear interlinkage between the NAP process and the national economic and social development plan and other strategic plans, and the rest give no clear or direct information. They generally state that the analysis has been or is being made of existing plans and strategies, relevant to combating desertification, in order to ensure complementarity and avoidance of duplication of efforts. They also assert that the UNCCD principles of partnership building and participatory development are highly acknowledged by government. Two reports point out that NAP formulation accepts that policies, strategies and action programmes contained in national conservation strategies and national environmental action plans can very well serve the purposes of combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought in the relevant areas of natural resources. And where such strategies and action plans are lacking in combating desertification, the NAP has incorporated additional policies and strategies.

44. Most NAPs are in an advanced stage of preparation. Only in a few countries have they already been approved by government for implementation.

45. Eleven Parties reported linkage or coherence of the NAP with the subregional action plan (SRAP) through participation in SRAP activities and specific programmes, ranging from water resources and river basin rehabilitation, to strengthening of early warning systems in the context of the UNCCD and membership in the subregional Committee on Science and Technology (CST). They also interact with the regional action programme (RAP) through the thematic RAP workshops. Most Parties also reported receiving technical backstopping from the subregional organizations.

46. Most Parties have conducted an analysis of existing environmental and sectoral legislation with similar findings that, in most cases, such legislation was fragmented, weak and not functional and effective. Some Parties have amended some of the legislation, while the majority have proposed, and in some cases formulated new comprehensive environmental management and/or coordination laws. This is a very significant and positive effort by African country Parties to establish a strong and long-term foundation for implementing the UNCCD.

47. One country mentioned that the existing legal framework remains purely theoretical and has not been able to create any impact on the betterment of the overall situation, due to the economic crisis the country is going through.

48. The work on the establishment of coherent and functional legal and regulating frameworks in African countries as one of the vehicles for implementing the UNCCD illustrates the commitment and expectation of reversing land degradation and achieving sustainable development.

49. One report claims that one of the principal national goals has been to review and reformulate national laws to implement the notion of governance based on real decentralization of power.

C. Participatory process in support of the preparation and implementation of the action programme

50. Several measures have been taken by many Parties to ensure real capacity and empowerment of local populations and authorities to participate in combating desertification. These include consultative workshops and seminars, development of locally adapted information kits in local languages, review and harmonization of sectoral and cross-sectoral policies to take account of local population's and authorities' aspirations, and adoption of decentralization policies that empower people. Non-governmental coordinating committees have also been formed to undertake networking and establish linkages at all levels in implementing the UNCCD.

51. One report states that under national law a network of NGOs has been created that contributes significantly to the work of the NCB.

52. The reports show that various strategies have effectively been applied together to inform and sensitize stakeholders at different levels in each country Party, in order to ensure their meaningful participation in the NAP process. National administrative and political structures and the agricultural extension system have been provided with information materials on combating land degradation targeted at the level intended, with different degrees of achievement in the different countries. Awareness campaigns and consultative workshops and seminars at various levels and for various target groups; NGO/CBO awareness forums and donor forums have all been implemented in a structured manner. Educational materials for primary, secondary and tertiary levels have been prepared and distributed; and UNCCD materials have been translated into local languages, posters, drama and song for community level sensitization.

53. Radio, television and the press are reported as the mechanisms for getting information to all stakeholders. In most African countries, radio broadcasts in local languages about combating land degradation are common-place.

54. Twenty reports mentioned the holding of a national forum to launch or to validate the national action programme to combat desertification. Another eight Parties plan to organize a national forum before COP 3. This represents a major milestone in the NAP process (see annex III).

55. The participatory process finds expression in representatives of stakeholders taking part in the campaigns, seminars, national forum workshops, steering committee and sub-committees and pilot projects. Most reports, therefore, recognize that it will need continued awareness-raising and education to get whole populations of districts, provinces and the country as a whole to participate effectively in the UNCCD process. Activities to commemorate the World Day to Combat Desertification, 17 June, were reported by most Parties.

56. Some reports stress that although a significant number of local initiatives have been taken, rural and community-based associations are still not able to communicate their real needs to the national level, to ensure real participation in environment and sustainable development policy. These groups are therefore not yet full partners in a self-developing environment to combat land degradation and desertification. It is also pointed out in some reports that sensitization creates great expectations at the community level and if these expectations are not met, loss of interest may ensue. Immediate follow-up action through local project implementation is therefore essential.

57. Information on the questions of gender policies and gender balance varies considerably in the reports. A significant number do not discuss the issue at all, while the majority state that the proportion of women participating in the NAP steering committee and its organs, and in the process of developing NAP projects, is targeted to increase. Although most reports state that the proportion of women participating at community level is in most cases higher than that of men, the

reports do not clarify whether the women are sufficiently sensitized and informed to make inputs.

58. Few of the reports mention gender awareness training for the steering committee and other organs. Several reports show that most governments are in the process of formulating gender policies, and some already have such policies. The overall situation is that women's participation in the NAP formulation process is still below the expected levels in all countries.

59. One report states that although 64.3 per cent of agricultural workers are women, only 5 percent of the rural chiefs are female. Some reports state that, besides women, youth are considered important for the participatory implementation of the Convention. In one case it is reported that youth under 18 years constitute 55 per cent of the country's population.

D. Consultative process in support of the preparation and implementation of the national action programme and the partnership agreement with developed country Parties and other interested entities

60. The reports acknowledge the various inputs of international partners into the NAP process as well as the partnership arrangements that are beginning to emerge. The measures taken by governments to ensure the involvement of international partners vary slightly among the African subregions. In the western African subregion the process of creating a donor consultative group or forum has been completed and six of the governments have designated a lead country from the group to serve as facilitator for the NAP process. Two reports mention that donors are involved without a formal or informal set-up. In the eastern and southern African subregions however, no government has designated a lead donor country because the process of establishing a donor consultative forum has not started or is still being discussed. In such cases the UNDP country office, which calls regular donor meetings, has been playing an important role by facilitating contacts and consultations between the NCB and the international partners. For northern Africa, the Maghreb-European (trans-Mediterranean) partnership approach is considered most important.

61. Measures taken to facilitate the participation of international partners as mentioned in most reports include: invitations to participate in all national UNCCD activities from the "early awareness creation days" seminars to all activities leading to the holding of the first national forum, to facilitate information sharing and solicit opinions and inputs of partners; direct consultations with their representatives; special donors' forums for specific reasons, for example on the establishment of the national desertification fund; and requests to UNDP country offices which are members of the national coordinating body, to act as the link and brief the international partners on the progress and problems in the implementation of the NAP process. Several Parties reported organizing "donors' forums" or "partners against desertification seminars" to try to create partnership agreements, but with mixed success.

62. Only one Party reported employing "full-time, a person to act as intermediate between the international agencies for donor funding and the government."

63. It may be noted that the consultative process with international partners has been more positive in the countries of the Sahel than in non-Sahelian countries in West Africa.

64. A significant number of reports were critical of the responses of international partners to government invitations to participate in national UNCCD activities. Sample of direct quotations from the reports illustrate the difficulties governments are encountering in trying to secure support from international partners for implementation of the UNCCD:

> "-- Thus programmes like combating desertification, under the UNCCD, although in principle accepted and ratified by both parties, are further subjected to further conditionalities. Such recent conditionalities to aid have included such common phases as: structural adjustments, good governance, devolution of powers, democracy, responsibility, transparency, clear priority settings in national development programming and resource allocation, accountability, sustainability, eradication of corruption, equity and efficiency in the use of resources.
>
> In addition, global economic recession is also commonly used to deny affected Parties from getting new and additional funding beyond traditional sources."

The report in question goes on to say that a donors' coordination committee on environment was "invited to participate in the first national forum, but only a few attended".

65. Another report states that although international partners have participated in the national forums and other activities on the UNCCD in the country, the steering committee and focal point have experienced certain problems:

> "The problems are generally related to the misconceptions on desertification and knowledge of the UNCCD by some partners. In some cases international partners are not conversant with their mandate in the Convention. Others who are already supporting certain UNCCD related activities in the country do not feel compelled to follow the NAP process and this could result in either duplication of efforts or restricted implementation of the NAP."

66. Another Party states: "The involvement of cooperative partners in the process has also not been easy. The number of partners that responded to invitations to meetings and workshops was usually between 30 and 50 per cent. This can be attributed to the level of awareness of the donor institutions on the UNCCD and its provisions and to the specific agendas which donors have for their funding and support".

67. One report expresses concern that, though the country had been encouraging international partners to fund projects even before their NAP elaboration phase, except in one case, none of the partners responded to the requests. The result, according to another report, is insufficiency of financial and technical support by partners, and this calls for a review of the partnership arrangements as the process moves to the NAP implementation phase.

E. Measures taken or planned within the framework of the national action plan programme, including measures to improve the economic environment, to conserve natural resources, to improve institutional organizations, to improve knowledge of desertification and monitor and assess the effects of drought

68. All reports cover this subject fairly adequately but presentation of information on specific sections differs considerably, with some sections not being reported on at all in most reports, and other reports discussing mainly ongoing programmes and projects. Taken together, the information contained in the reports does, however, indicate emerging trends.

69. On diagnosis and evaluation of past experience, the reports, with a few exceptions, state that evaluations and studies of past experience and activities in the field of combating desertification were, and in some cases are, being carried out, mainly by of local consultants, as the first step in NAP formulation. Some of the evaluations involved the majority of key stakeholders, especially NGOs and CBOs during the consultative workshops. The diagnosis provided information and proposals that formed part of the priority programme areas for the NAP as approved by the first national forum.

70. With regard to the establishment of technical programmes and integrated projects to combat desertification, the level of information in the reports varies considerably, with a number of reports providing a long list of ongoing projects in different natural resources sectors, as an inventory of projects which embody UNCCD principles and which are being integrated into the NAP process. Some reports discuss how this is being, and should be, done while a few reports also mention that evaluations, inventories and studies of natural resources management for integration into NAP have been published.

71. A few countries admit that the reviews and evaluations were not adequate and will conduct further studies, reviews and evaluations.

72. Various new actions and planned measures are discussed in most reports, varying from capacity-building mainly at local level and institutional reforms, to specific sectoral projects in water resources, agriculture, rural energy, education, etc. However, only a few reports clarify whether these are additional to those already identified in the NAP priority list. Most of the NAP priority projects are based on ongoing programmes and projects in different sectors and some are under implementation. Ten reports state that NAP priority programmes are integrated within the national environmental action plan or national conservation strategy.

Similarly, some reports state that new measures and actions will also be implemented, either as NAP pilot areas or community-based programmes.

73. A few reports mention harmonious links between NAP and SRAP in favour of both processes, and the country, through the national focal point or other representative participating in subregional action programme meetings. In addition, scientific and technical institutions are participating in existing networks mainly at the subregional level, thus making SRAP and NAP complementary.

74. Specific training and formulation of technical and scientific programmes do not seem to have taken place judging from the information in the reports, but specific actions and measures to strengthen national capacity to combat desertification, particularly at the local level, have been proposed as part of the NAP priority programmes to be implemented. Some reports mention that the evaluations, diagnosis and studies produced scientific and technical information on which the projects in the NAP are based. Other reports mention that the national scientific and technical institutions with capacity to train in natural resources management and in human resources development, which are participating fully in the NAP process, are already involved with training and strengthening the scientific and technical aspects of programmes for NAP implementation. One report states that:

> "... Although the NAP project has been prepared, the lack of expertise within the country in this area has been obvious. The need to bring in various international technical inputs cannot be overemphasized. It is the view of the Government that international assistance would be greatly appreciated in further improving the NAP formulation and implementation process".

75. Without enumerating specific measures, the majority of the reports state that since the NAP process has only reached the stage of organizing the first national forum, no integrated programmes for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought emanating from it are in place. But each report presents numerous other ongoing programmes and projects for combating land degradation which are undertaken by local populations with support from government and NGOs, their aim being to improve productivity, generate income, alleviate poverty and provide alternative livelihood systems. In this manner, the reports imply that the proposed NAP programmes can improve the environment and economic situation of the people.

76. Only some reports make brief statements on measures to improve the institutional organization for monitoring and evaluating measures to combat the effects of desertification, and these statements refer to both measures and procedures already in use under conservation strategies and national environment action plans and to measures proposed in the NAP.

77. Very brief statements are also made by some of the reports on partnership agreements applied, which refer to short-term memoranda of understanding signed between donors and government or local NGOs and CBOs for the implementation of natural resources community-based projects or pilot projects for the NAP; some

reports provide information on NAP support to CBOs implementing community-based pilot projects and signed agreements.

78. It should be appreciated that most of the information provided in the reports was on measures and activities which have only been formulated but not yet implemented. An extreme example of this is the case of information on the effectiveness of measures in local capacity-building; only three reports state that where NGOs have been working actively with local communities, a greater degree of responsibility has been achieved. The need to correct imbalances hindering active participation by some "disadvantaged groups", especially women, by developing and implementing targeted training programmes at community level was indicated.

79. With respect to measures taken in the framework of the NAP especially in the field of agricultural development, one report states that significant success has been achieved in evaluation and protection of water resources, and participation. The success is attributed to improvement and reduction of the bureaucracy and decentralization, as well as to the rising interest of important economic actors in the NAP process.

F. Financial allocations from national budgets in support of implementation as well as financial assistance and technical cooperation received and needed, identifying and prioritizing requirements

80. All reports supplied very scant information for this chapter, but it was sufficient to identify the following trends. Although not much has been done to ensure direct access by local actors to external funding for implementing projects within the NAP framework, all reports point out that government has always allocated resources, however modest, to ministries and departments that deal with management of natural resources, to implement projects with NGOs and CBOs at the community level. And although not fully integrated into the NAP process, such projects are combating land degradation and desertification. The amounts governments are putting into such projects vary greatly among the countries.

81. The national desertification fund being established by each Party, to which government, the private sector and donors are expected to contribute, is seen as the permanent form of funding which will ensure direct access by local actors to the implementation of community-level programmes to combat desertification. The fund is always formulated with broad-based participation of all stakeholders.

82. Eighteen Parties are still in the process of establishing a national desertification fund; three have completed the process and are only awaiting government approval; two are finalizing it; and the rest of the Parties do not mention such fund in their reports.

83. Some Parties mention that even when the fund is fully operational, the more "classical" financing and funding will continue to be the major source of funding for the NAP.

84. On NAP financing, all Parties report similar trends: government budgetary allocations to natural resources management sectors and directly to the NCB remain the main source of financing of the NAP process; during the NAP formulation phase several partners were approached and provided funding, particularly UNDP/UNSO, UNCCD secretariat and bilateral funding. Most reports quote the actual amounts of funds provided by governments over varying periods of time, and the amounts received from bilateral donors. Parties complain that the funding has not been adequate and some phase-one NAP activities are yet to be completed. Only one Party reported contacting the Global Mechanism and it is still awaiting their response. The other reports do not give reasons for not contacting the GM, or say when they will do so.

85. Plans for requesting technical cooperation have been included in the NAP programmes of the Parties. All Parties received technical assistance through the same partners as those that provided financial assistance, and from the subregional organizations, all in the form of consultants who provided advice and technical backstopping, issue papers and general direction during the NAP formulation phase.

86. All reports express the need for technical support, now that the NAP process is entering the implementation stage. The top priorities include assistance for technical inputs into the elaboration and implementation of concrete NAP programmes; capacity-building for NGOs, CBOs and disadvantaged groups, especially women, to ensure their effective implementation of the NAP; and scientific support. Some reports include a list of priority programmes to be implemented in the next two to five years, with an overall budget figure for funds needed. One report mentions that a round table for donors will be organized to ensure financing of newly identified activities within the NAP.

G. Review of the benchmarks and indicators utilized to measure progress, and an assessment thereof

87. In brief, indicators for measuring progress and assessment are being developed by all Parties, and these will be based on current ones being used for the national conservation strategy or national environmental action plan or by the national environmental secretariat or council or any relevant department. Some reports state that they used the benchmarks and indicators adopted at the subregional level and evaluated the process of formulating the NAP, while others give a list of proposed indicators they intend to use as the NAP implementation process gets under way. A few reports show that Parties have established a team or committee to propose implementation and impact indicators and benchmarks. Parties which have produced state-of-the-environment reports have a more reliable source of information to build on in developing benchmarks and indicators.

88. The reports did not provide details on how Parties are implementing decision 22/COP.1, requesting governments to initiate testing of implementation indicators identified in document A/AC.241/INF.4 as revised by document ICCD/COP(1) CST/3/Add.1; and decision 16/COP.2. There is a need for the regional and subregional organizations and specialized institutions, particularly in Africa, to

assist Parties to implement these decisions and, where necessary, to develop common benchmarks and indicators so as to facilitate meaningful evaluation and comparison of implementation of the UNCCD. In so doing, the Parties and subregional organizations and specialized institutions will need financial and technical assistance as well as the cooperation of relevant international organizations, in accordance with decision 16/Cop.2, paragraph 4.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

A. Lessons from the NAP formulation process

89. Referring to article 5 of the UNCCD on the obligations of affected country Parties, the national reports show that African country Parties have started laying the foundations for the long-term process of combating land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought, with the objectives of alleviating poverty and achieving sustainable development.

90. Budgetary resources are being allocated annually to the NCB and through sectoral programmes for natural resources management by all Parties "in accordance with their circumstances and capabilities". But given the magnitude of the problems of land degradation and the levels of poverty to be overcome, such resource allocation is not adequate. While an increase in government budgetary allocations to combating desertification is desirable and necessary, more resources can be "released" and made available if there is better coordination and harmonization of implementation of projects in the natural resources sectors, especially donor funded-projects, and coordination between the national, district and community levels. The real challenge to the Parties is to develop appropriate strategies for effective coordination and collaboration in the implementation of development plans and the three Rio conventions at the local level.

91. Institutional reform and development, including decentralization, legislative reforms and integration of strategic frameworks, are being carried out and provide an enabling environment for implementing the Convention. The challenge is that for these measures to be effective, the Parties have to create district and community-level development councils or committees that include representatives of all stakeholders and have resources, power and capacity to manage their natural resources and implement the UNCCD.

92. NAP priority programmes which have been formulated in most countries to combat desertification are by and large within the framework of conservation and environmental plans and policies. However, their implementation has to be coordinated and monitored to ensure that they are meeting sustainable development objectives and goals, especially at the local community level.

93. It is a well documented fact that in Africa poverty is both the cause and the consequence of land degradation and desertification, and this has been addressed in the NAP programmes proposed. Whereas bio-physical benchmarks and indicators exist

in various places and can be applied in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the programmes on combating desertification, socio-economic indicators have yet to be developed in the system of benchmarks and indicators to monitor the impact of the NAP programmes on poverty alleviation. This issue should receive more attention by Parties that are embarking on the implementation of the NAP programmes.

94. Parties have made great efforts to promote awareness and facilitate the participation of local populations, particularly women and youth, with the support of non-governmental organizations in response to article 5(d) of the Convention. The national reports document several awareness, sensitization and consultative seminars and workshops organized at various levels in each country. These are however not enough and they are only the beginning of a long process, for, in most countries only priority affected parts of the country have been selected for the sensitization and consultative process while other areas are yet to be covered. NGO and CBO forums were organized mainly at national level and have yet to be organized at district and local community level in some countries. In spite of national gender policies being formulated, the question of gender balance in the NCB and its various committees and in the formulation of concrete implementable NAP projects needs more serious and urgent attention than Parties seem to have given it, taking into consideration the many cultural, traditional and socio-political challenges involved in mainstreaming gender issues into the UNCCD process.

95. One of the major institutional measures taken by all African Parties is the establishment of a UNCCD national coordinating body with a multidisciplinary national steering committee which in most cases has several subcommittees, and a national focal point person and secretariat for the NAP, all to coordinate the formulation and implementation of the UNCCD and mobilize resources, both internal and international, for the process. These NCB structures are however "new" and need to be developed into permanent bodies and strengthened in terms of technical capacity and financial resources, a challenge which should be addressed by government institutions, NGOs, the private sector and international partners.

96. Developed country Parties have, to various extents, supported the UNCCD process in all African countries and the national reports provide information on the level of financial and technical support provided. But the reports also reveal that African country Parties perceive the involvement of international partners in the UNCCD process as being lower than expected, especially in the context of article 6(b) and (c) of the Convention. This is a big challenge to African country Parties individually and in their subregional and regional groupings, to redesign innovative strategies of involving donor partners, be it through donor forum consultations and information sharing on a regular basis, or by designating a lead donor, or by putting UNCCD implementation plans and projects on agendas of official government and NGO negotiations with donors, or a combination of all of the above.

97. On the part of the developed country Parties, the previous approach of funding specific activities or events during the NAP formulation process will not be suitable for NAP implementation. In the countries and across the various subregions

of Africa, a structured response from the donor community is called for as the way forward in developing partnership arrangements that provide predictable support for long-term implementation of programmes to combat desertification.

98. An opportunity for achieving synergy among the three Rio conventions exists but few national reports explained how coordination and collaboration among the conventions is being done. Guidelines prepared by the UNCCD secretariat and any other information on synergy among the conventions should be made available to country Parties and subregional organizations, which should jointly organize training sessions for the NCB organs and NGOs on how to forge synergy in the implementation of the three conventions, especially at district and local community level.

99. Although recommended in the Help Guide, African country Parties were not required to report on country profiles and none did. However, given sufficient guidelines, and resources, the Parties could and should prepare such country profiles before they formulate their second national reports to the COP, in order to facilitate comparison and wider circulation of their information.

B. Lessons from the national reporting process

100. Guidelines contained in decision 11/COP.1 and the Help Guide provided a common format for preparing the national reports, but variations in depth of coverage and content as well as style of presentation remain.

101. These being the first national reports on the implementation of the Convention, they should provide minimum baseline information and data as a benchmark from which to evaluate progress in the next round of national reporting. Generally, the reports provide baseline information on the establishment and functioning of the NCB; the first round of the sensitization, education and consultative process to ensure stakeholders' participation at national and local levels; priority programme areas for NAP implementation; resource mobilization and partnership arrangements; the convening of the first national forum; and the need to put in place benchmarks and indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the NAP process. The lesson in these first reports is that the foundation for implementing the Convention has been laid and needs strengthening so that the implementation of NAP programmes can have a firm base.

102. It is clear that the reports were written under extreme pressure due to the short time (one and a half to two months) available, and in the process some useful information might have been omitted. For example a few reports did not document the consultative and participatory process leading to the convening of the first national forum, and some others did not state whether or not the national forum has been or will be convened.

103. The Help Guide is perceived as being too detailed in the suggested questions, and asking for similar information in different sections, thus leading to possible duplication in the reporting.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

104. The Conference of the Parties is invited to:

(a) Receive the first national reports submitted and encourage those Parties that have not yet submitted their first national reports to do so as soon as they can;

(b) Consider the constraints and needs, both financial and technical, identified by the African Parties and take necessary action and measures to address them;

(c) Invite African Parties and other interested developing country Parties, as well as the cooperating partners, to give their feedback on the Help Guide as an input into a review of the Help Guide to be undertaken for the benefit of the reporting process worldwide.

Annex I

FORMAT AND CONTENT OF REPORTS

(decision 11/COP.1, paragraph 10(a))

Reports should be as concise as possible to facilitate their review. They should be structured as follows, taking into account the degree of development of action programmes and other relevant circumstances:

Reports on national action programmes

(i) A table of contents;

(ii) A summary not exceeding six pages;

(iii) The strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies;

(iv) The institutional measures taken to implement the Convention;

(v) The participatory process in support of the preparation and implementation of the action programme;

(vi) The consultative process in support of the preparation and implementation of the national action programme and the partnership agreement with developed country Parties and other interested entities;

(vii) The measures taken or planned within the framework of the national action programmes, including measures to improve the economic environment, to conserve natural resources, to improve institutional organization, to improve knowledge of desertification and to monitor and assess the effects of drought;

(viii) Financial allocations from national budgets in support of implementation as well as financial assistance and technical cooperation received and needed, identifying and prioritizing requirements;

(ix) A review of the benchmarks and indicators utilized to measure progress and an assessment thereof;

Annex II

COUNTRY PARTIES WHICH HAVE SUBMITTED THEIR NATIONAL REPORTS

1. Algeria
2. Angola
3. Benin
4. Botswana
5. Burkina Faso
6. Cameroon
7. Cape Verde
8. Chad
9. Côte d'Ivoire
10. Djibouti
11. Egypt
12. Eritrea
13. Ethiopia
14. Gambia
15. Ghana
16. Guinea
17. Kenya
18. Lesotho
19. Libya
20. Madagascar
21. Malawi
22. Mali
23. Mauritania
24. Morocco
25. Mozambique
26. Namibia
27. Niger
28. Nigeria
29. Rwanda
30. Senegal
31. South Africa
32. Sudan
33. Swaziland
34. Tanzania
35. Togo
36. Tunisia
37. Uganda
38. Zambia
39. Zimbabwe

Annex III

STATUS OF NATIONAL FORUMS

Country	Date of national forum
Algeria	x (1999)
Angola	x
Benin	✓August 1996
Botswana	✓October 1997
Burkina Faso	✓July 1997
	✓July 1999
Cameroon	x
Cape Verde	✓November 1995
	✓March 1998
Chad	✓February 1999
Côte d'Ivoire	x
Djibouti	x (1999)
Egypt	x
Eritrea	x (1999)
Ethiopia	✓November 1998
Gambia	✓November 1998
Ghana	x
Guinea	x
Kenya	✓October 1998
Lesotho	✓March 1998
Libya	x
Madagascar	x
Malawi	x (1999)
Mali	✓May 1998
Mauritania	x
Morocco	x (1999)
Mozambique	x (1999)
Namibia	✓July 1994
Niger	✓March 1998
Nigeria	x
Rwanda	x
Senegal	✓May 1997
	✓August 1998
South Africa	x (1999)
Sudan	✓October 1998
Swaziland	✓September 1997
Tanzania	x (1999)
Togo	✓June 1999
Tunisia	✓June 1998
Uganda	✓November 1998
Zambia	✓December 1998
Zimbabwe	✓August 1997
	✓November 1998

✓: National forum organized
x(1999): Plan to organize national forum before December 1999
x: No information / not done

Annex IV

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3. Benin	"	12
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5. Burkina Faso	"	20
6. Cameroon	"	28
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8. Chad	"	10
9. Côte d'Ivoire	"	12
10. Djibouti	"	12
11. Egypt	"	19
12. Eritrea	"	21
13. Ethiopia	"	24
14. Gambia	"	31
15. Ghana	"	33
16. Guinea	"	34
17. Kenya	ICCD/COP(3)/5/Add.2 (C)	3
18. Lesotho	"	12
19. Libya	"	15
20. Madagascar	"	23
21. Malawi	"	26
22. Mali	"	27
23. Mauritania	"	32
24. Morocco	ICCD/COP(3)/5/Add.2 (D)	3
25. Mozambique	"	9
26. Namibia	"	13
27. Niger	"	18
28. Nigeria	"	24
29. Rwanda	"	29
30. Senegal	"	31
31. South Africa	"	35
32. Sudan	ICCD/COP(3)/5/Add.2 (E)	3
33. Swaziland	"	10
34. Tanzania	"	15
35. Togo	"	20
36. Tunisia	"	26
37. Uganda	"	34
38. Zambia	"	40
39. Zimbabwe	"	46

UNITED NATIONS

Convention to Combat Desertification

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

REVIEW OF REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF AFFECTED AFRICAN COUNTRY PARTIES, INCLUDING ON THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS AND ON EXPERIENCES GAINED AND RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES

Addendum

COMPILATION OF SUMMARIES AS PRESENTED IN THE NATIONAL REPORTS SUBMITTED BY AFRICAN COUNTRY PARTIES*

Note by the secretariat

1. The Conference of the Parties, by its decisions 11/COP.1 and 5/COP.2, requested the secretariat to prepare a report based on the information contained in national reports, to be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its third session. Only African country Parties are required to present their reports to COP.3.

2. Decision 11/COP.1 provided guidelines and procedures for organizing and presenting the national reports and required in particular a summary of the national reports, not exceeding six pages.

3. This document contains the summaries of national reports submitted by six African country Parties. The concerned countries are: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon. The secretariat will also make this compilation of summaries of national reports available on the Convention's Website (**www.unccd.de**) for wider circulation.

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ALGERIA

I. Introduction

This report was prepared by Algeria, a party to the Convention, in response to decisions 11/COP.1 (Rome 1997) and 5/COP.2 (Dakar 1998) concerning procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which was ratified by Algeria in May 1996 and entered into force on 26 December 1996.

This report, drawn up in keeping with the template laid down by CCD, describes the state of progress in implementing the Convention and the efforts made by Algeria in combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought.

Within its 2.4 million square kilometres, Algeria contains major biogeographical units, namely the Tell zone, characterized by a Mediterranean climate of the dry subhumid type, which is subject to the phenomenon of erosion; the steppe zone, with an arid and semi-arid climate, facing desertification, and lastly the Saharan zone, which accounts for 80 per cent of the country and has a desert climate.

This wide variety of landscapes and biotopes is affected by widespread degradation which entails harmful consequences, both ecological and socio-economic.

In the face of this widespread degradation, Algeria has undertaken a set of strategic, institutional and regulatory actions and measures since the 1970s to halt or at least attenuate the effects of this desertification.

Where strategies and policies for sustainable development are concerned, it should be emphasized that Algeria has 7 million hectares of usable agricultural area, constituting a mere 3 per cent of its land area. This usable agricultural area amounts to 0.32 hectares per inhabitant, a figure which is steadily diminishing as a result of population growth and the loss of agricultural soils caused by phenomena of degradation.

In this context, a strategy for protection and development generated a variety of sectoral plans which will need to be brought into line with the national environmental action plan and the national blueprint for physical planning.

The national reforestation plan, drawn up in 1998, is designed to extend forest cover over 1,250,000 hectares over 20 years and raise the forest cover ratio from the current 11 per cent to 13 per cent by the year 2020.

This plan basically covers the development of the existing forests, commercial reforestation for timber production, reforestation for protective purposes along catchment basin perimeters to combat erosion, extension of the green barrier as a part of efforts to combat desertification and amenity reforestation in population centres, especially in the Sahara.

The National Plan to Combat Desertification

The national plan, which has been in the process of implementation since 1987, falls within the framework of the various programmes for development of the steppe zones, and aims at intensification and extension of the green barrier project through restriction of mechanized ploughing in potential farming areas (Dayas) in the context of development, the reconstitution of the degraded forests of the Saharan Atlas through large-scale reforestation, the closing off of degraded areas for the purpose of reconstituting the pasture cover and the creation of infrastructure for opening up the marginalized zones.

The Strategy for the Preservation of Biodiversity

Environmental impacts have not always been taken into account in socio-economic development. Starting in the 1980s, Algeria became aware of this important dimension and implemented a policy for the preservation of eco-biological resources aiming in particular at preserving sites hosting unique or fragile ecosystems and protecting rare or endangered species.

In order to identify its resource endowment, Algeria embarked on a national inventory of biological diversity in 1997.

To that end, ten (10) national parks and five (5) nature reserves which are representative of the country's various ecosystems have been established. This policy is buttressed by international commitments. It foreshadows a national strategy in keeping with the provisions of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity which is under preparation.

The National Environmental Action Plan

Under the first phase of the national environmental action plan, which is being drawn up, a detailed diagnosis of the state of the environment in Algeria was carried out and the direct and indirect causes of the deterioration noted were identified.

Under the second phase, a national action programme will be drawn up on the basis of the diagnosis, and the costs and benefits of the various options will be evaluated.

The National Programme of Scientific Research and Technological Development

This programme, whose outline was set out in law No. 98-11 of 22 August 1998, is composed of 30 national research programmes, including a programme relating to desertification and the development of arid and semi-arid zones.

The socio-economic objectives of this programme relate to self-sufficiency in the arid and semi-arid zones and their complete integration in the process of national economic development.

The scientific objectives relate to regional climate assessment, a precise and up-to-date inventory of natural resources, regular geographical monitoring, assessment of processes of erosion and degradation of arid and semi-arid environments, determination of the potentialities of these

environments, description of surface conditions using space-based techniques, development of treatment methods, analysis of these environments, the establishment of databases.

The expected outcomes of this programme include:

Constitution of a national research system based on the Centre for Scientific and Technical Research on Arid Regions;

- Strengthening the existing human scientific potential, which remains poor despite the existence of thirteen (13) operational research units composed of establishments of higher education and training, research centres, research institutions and bodies falling in the commercial sector (INRAA, INRF, ONM, INCT, CDARS, etc);

- The establishment of an intersectoral national network based on the Centre for Scientific and Technical Research on Arid Regions and its linking to international networks (AFRICAGIS, AFRICAEIS, etc.);

- Training, in the search for trainers and upgrading of supervision of personnel in charge of implementation of desertification control activities.

The New Physical Planning Policy

This policy, which was initiated in the 1980s, with the establishment of the Ministry of Planning and Land Use Management, the launching of the national blueprint and regional blueprints for land use management, has not been fully finalized.

In 1987, the Land Use Management Act was promulgated.

Since 1994, the Ministry for Equipment and Physical Planning has striven to refine the new policy and instruments for its implementation in the light of the country's socio-economic evolution. Its sphere of action covers the balanced development of the entire country through readjustment of its constituent infrastructure, the protection and rational use of its resources and the sound development of the potentialities of its various areas.

The physical planning blueprint (to the year 2020), which is scheduled to be launched in 1999, is also designed to incorporate and harmonize all the national plans and blueprints, including the plans due to be drawn up in the environmental field.

Where the steppe zones are concerned, the studies of the geographical areas which are to be designated as concessions are to be refined, an inventory of resources is to be drawn up and the urban framework is to be reorganized so as to arrive at consistent blueprints for planning and sustainable development. Lastly, machinery which will stimulate the promotion of public and private investment, especially in SMEs/SMIs, will be devised and set up.

The Water Policy and Strategy

Potential renewable water resources in Algeria are estimated at 15 billion cubic metres, 80 per cent of which is surface water and 20 per cent underground. The south (Sahara) possesses for the most part reserves of exploitable connate water amounting to 5 billion cubic metres per year.

The major thrust of action by the authorities is to supply the public with drinking water and sanitation in the light of their direct impacts on public health and economic and social development. This policy has produced a connection ratio of 87 per cent in urban centres and 74 per cent in rural areas.

In irrigation, the State operates in large estates and private initiative in small-scale and medium-scale water development.

This being the case, supply continues to fall below declared requirements. Consequently the new policy is aimed at better control of management, demand, protection of water resources against pollution and above all control of leakage rates, which are to be reduced from 40 per cent to 20 per cent. For this purpose, a water code was adopted in 1996 and a dam construction programme which, by the year 2020, should enable all mobilizable water resources to be mobilized.

II. Institutional Measures Taken to Implement the Convention

The policies for desertification control and conservation of natural resources are the responsibility of the State. The implementation of this policy and the related programmes is the task of the specialist machinery, establishments of higher education and training, research centres, local communities, and organizations in civil society, each in its own sphere of competence.

In this context, the institutions and bodies involved are:

The national coordinating body established under a ministerial order of 15 June 1998, whose principal task is to ensure intersectoral coordination, in the drawing up and implementation of the national plan of action.

The sectoral institutions, an institutional and organizational framework, responsible for the drawing up, implementation and follow-up of the desertification control programmes, are:

- **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, whose principal function is to handle international activities undertaken by Algeria in the context of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. In this way, it plays a preponderant role, alongside the various national bodies involved in desertification control, in making preparations at the national level for the conferences of the States parties to the convention and in organizing subregional, regional or international workshops and forums falling within the framework of the implementation of the convention. A subdirectorate has been

set up for this purpose as an interface between the national bodies and international institutions dealing with the environment;

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, through the Directorate-General for Forests (focal point for the Convention), is the institution responsible for drawing up and applying the policy for preventing efforts to combat all kinds of degradation of the natural environment (fauna, flora, soil, etc.) and implementing sustainable development activities. It is buttressed by the following specialist structures:

- The National Agency for Nature Protection;
- The Office of the High Commissioner for Development of the Steppe;
- The National Institute of Agronomic Research;
- The Office of the Commissioner for the Development of Agriculture in Saharan Regions;

The Ministry of the Interior, Local Communities and the Environment, which is responsible, under the secretary of State for the environment, for defining, guiding and coordinating the policy for environmental management and protection.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The Ministry of Higher Education, aware of the fact that the effectiveness of the machinery for handling research in the field of desertification is linked, on the one hand, to its capacity for national technical and scientific mobilization and its ability to develop a trend towards exchanges and partnership, operates through its research centres, notably the centre for scientific and technical research on the arid regions, and its intersectoral national network for thematic research made up of the university institutions and training.

The Ministry of Transport: through the national meteorological office, this department is a partner with a special role in the exchange of data with all the partners involved in efforts to combat desertification;

The Ministry of Land Use Planning operates in the establishment of national blueprints for land use planning and rural development.

The intermediary bodies

In order to ensure intersectoral coordination and participation by civil society, the following have been established:

- The Higher Council on the Environment and Sustainable Development, chaired by the Head of Government;

- The National Council of Scientific Research, also chaired by the Head of Government, and responsible inter alia for setting priorities among the national programmes and evaluating their implementation;

- The National Forest Council, established under the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries as a consultative body in the field of forestry policy and nature protection;

- The non-governmental organizations for nature protection (NGOs).

Under Act No. 90-31 on associations, adopted in 1990, 50,000 associations have been set up, and nearly 250 of them work in the field of the environment and nature protection.

In the context of the implementation of the convention, some 20 associations have established a National Network, the National Committee of Algerian NGOs, which is affiliated to the International Network of NGOs to combat desertification.

III. Legislative and regulatory framework

Algeria has long had legislative and regulatory instruments which govern the management, exploitation and protection of natural resources. They include:

- **Act No. 83-03** on protection of the Environment, adopted in 1983;

- **Act No. 83-18** on access to rural land ownership, adopted in 1983;

- **Act No. 84-12**, establishing a general regime governing Forests;

- **Act No. 87-01** on land use planning;

- **Act No. 90-25** on guidelines in matters of land ownership;

- **Act No. 90-29** on town planning;

- **Act No. 98-11** on the orientation of the five-year programme of scientific research and scientific development (1998-2002):

  - **The water code**, adopted in 1996;

  - **The forest code**, which is under preparation.

IV. Participatory process in support of the preparation of the action programme

The process of participation set in motion for the preparation of the national action plan relates to awareness creation and the involvement of the different sectors affected by the problems of desertification. The members of

the national coordinating body, who are completely committed and active, make major contributions, each in its own specific area, in the design of the national action plan.

But the objective is above all to involve the most remote populations in the country particularly affected by desertification.

Forums are organized at the local level in which the non-governmental organizations, the associations, the Chambers of Agriculture and Commerce, pastoralists and farmers have participated in an intensive and committed manner.

In this context, mention should be made of the two (2) forums in Tébessa on the occasion Of World Day to Combat Desertification (1994/1996), the two (2) meetings at Khenchela (1994/1995), the meeting in Ghardaia 1996, Béchar (Taghit 1998), the regional meeting of NGOs in Algiers (1998), and the meeting in Djelfa specifically on pastoralism (1996).

In addition, all the complaints and suggestions from the participants were taken into consideration in the preparation of the national action plan.

V. The consultative process

The action plan being prepared has already led to the formulation of a request to the CCD secretariat for a technical and financial contribution.

However, in the framework of the many programmes to combat the degradation of natural resources which Algeria has been carrying out for decades, many requests have been addressed to specialized international organizations and institutions (UNEP, UNDP, GEF, FAO, ADB, IDB, etc.), and to other financial institutions; none produced any results, except for the "El-Kala humid zone" development projects. A national forum concerning the national action plan will also be organized shortly, to which all these institutions will be invited.

VI. Measures adopted under the national action plan

As early as the 1970s Algeria launched the Green Barrier project, in view of the harmful consequences of desertification on the people and socio-economic infrastructure. Originally designed as a simple intensive reforestation and road infrastructure operation, up to the 1980s, this approach was rapidly dropped following a negative reaction on the part of the local populations, who witnessed grazing land shrinking in favour of forests. The strategy then adopted, from the 1980s onwards, on the basis of studies prepared for that purpose, made it possible to draw up a concept of development of the integrated type, in particular agro-silvo-pastoral. This concept takes into account public awareness creation, rangeland rehabilitation and intensification, development of land in potential zones with mobilization of water resources and construction of infrastructure for opening up remote areas. All these programmes are coordinated in order to consolidate them with other multisectoral activities.

VII. Financial allocations from the State budget

In Algeria, all programmes relating to the protection and development of natural resources are deemed to be of public benefit under the various pieces of legislation, and consequently all the funding is shouldered by the State budget.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Algeria has drawn up and implemented its plan to combat desertification since 1987.

This programme of action and the many studies dealing with the development and protection of natural resources will form the main foundation of the future national action plan, in which public participation will be given pride of place. The experience acquired in combating desertification has made it possible to pinpoint the causes of this phenomenon and the future activities should be on a large scale and should be placed in a perspective which is not only ecological but above all social and economic.

This is only possible through intensification of training and research with an indispensable contribution from international cooperation, which constitutes the appropriate framework for a partnership which will allow national capabilities to reach their objectives.

ANGOLA

The Government of Angola has elaborated and implemented economic and social development programmes with a triennial periodicity. In these programmes, and according to the actual situation, the priorities set by the Government are defined.

Parallel to that, as a result of the peace process, the Government submitted to the international community the Community Rehabilitation Programme (PRC) which aims among others to rehabilitate the rural infrastructure and resettle war refugees and displaced people.

The Government, following the UNCCD recommendations, has created the National Coordination Committee, where all the related sectors of the civil society, bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies are represented. Despite the crises that have hit the country, the Government has allocated in its 1999 budget, funds to support activities of this Committee, and furnish the office with the essential means needed to run the project. In this manner, the Government prepared and submitted to potential donors the project of Capacity Building to assist the National Coordination Body to strengthen its role as leader of the NAP process.

Within the scope of some activities undertaken by the Government, some actions have been initiated, such as the approval of the Basic Environmental Law, the Water Law, the Fishing Law, and the revision of the economical legislation to accommodate the political changes taking place in Angola.

Particularly, the Ministry of Fishing and Environment has considered as priority its mandate in relation to Mother Nature: to conduct with success an educational and sensitization programme on environment on both a formal and informal basis. The Ministry of Education and Culture, civil society and the media have also supported this programme.

The Government of Angola has contacted the cooperating partners and submitted for funding the Kalahari-Namib and NAP assistance projects.

Between 1986 and 1990 the country suffered a catastrophic drought. In this period it lost many people and livestock, an experience which triggered the 1st National Forum on Drought and Desertification. The meeting recommended integrated management programmes and a participatory programme on both environment and natural resources.

In progress is the revision of legislation on government agencies and local authorities, and their empowerment to allow their participation at the local community level.

The NAP will benefit from local and international resources allocated through its facilitation body, the National Desertification Fund (NDF) which will be created under the scope of the implementation of the Convention in Angola.

The present needs with regard to cooperation issues relate to the technical assistance domain, for the installation of the National Coordination Committee, and the preparation of documents for the 1st National Forum on the NAP.

BENIN

In accordance with decision 11/COP.1, the Republic of Benin presents its first national report on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD).

This report records progress in the implementation of the CCD since its ratification on 17 June 1996.

Drawing on the guidelines for the drafting of national reports for the CCD, this report falls into three parts:

- The situation of Benin as regards the provisions of the CCD;
- The state of implementation of the CCD: status of activities and prospects;
- Support from development partners for the implementation of the CCD and financial resources allocated under the national budget.

In connection with the first part, it is agreeable to note that, through the agency of various documents containing strategic guidance, national plans

and frameworks, Benin is in harmony with the global vision and objectives of the CCD. Indeed, matters could not be otherwise. Benin, an essentially agricultural country, is very concerned at the continuing degradation of its natural resources.

The second point indicates the great importance Benin attaches to the methodical, iterative and integrated preparation of its NAP/CD. The last phase of work on this important tool for combating desertification has been initiated. In this context, a first pre-project document was validated in December 1998 and the latest consultation reports demanded by the seminar held to validate this pre-project document are already available. These reports will be evaluated, finalized and returned before they are brought into line with the pre-project document, so that Benin's NAP/CD is available in October 1999, as stipulated by the seminar.

For Benin, the drawing up of the NAPs is a major opportunity to take stock of action carried out to reverse the adverse trend in natural resources and factors of production and prompt decision makers to set out clear-cut options on problem areas which involve bush fires, international transhumance, rural land ownership, etc. Benin's ambition is to make it an innovative framework serving as a reference in efforts to combat desertification and promote rural development.

The third part describes support from development partners to Benin in the implementation of the CCD. The provisional version of this report was examined in a nationwide consultation held under the auspices of CILSS. The observations and evaluation supplied by the Permanent Secretariat of the National Committee to Combat Desertification, the national coordinating body, led to the present final version.

BOTSWANA

Botswana is a landlocked country at the centre of southern Africa and shares borders with Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia and South Africa. The mean altitude above sea level is approximately 1,000 m and the country's total land area is 582,000 km^2. Much of the country is generally flat, with gentle undulations and occasional rocky outcrops.

The average annual rainfall varies from 250 mm in the extreme south-west to 650 mm in the extreme north-east. Almost all the rainfall occurs during the summer months, from October to April; the period from May to September is generally dry.

Most rainfall occurs in localized showers and thunderstorms, and its incidence is highly variable both in time and space.

Evaporation rates are high and range from 1.8 m to over 2.2 m annually for surface water. Meagre and highly variable rainfall, both in time and space, combined with high evapo-transpiration rates make Botswana a water-short country where drought is a recurring hazard.

Botswana's main natural resources are range and arable land, a large wildlife population, and a variety of known and promising occurrences of

minerals. Arable land is scarce. It is estimated that less than 5 per cent of Botswana's land area is cultivable. Much of the best arable land is found in the freehold farming areas in the east. The greater portion of the land is suited to extensive beef production. The economy of Botswana is dominated by the mineral sector which contributes about 34 per cent of the total GDP and agriculture only contributes 4.1 per cent. On average the GDP grew by 6 per cent for the entire post-independence period. Expressed in 1993/94 prices, annual per capita real GDP has grown from P1,682 in 1966 to P7,863 in 1994/95.

Despite the fact that Botswana is a middle-income economy, poverty still prevails particularly in the rural areas where income-generating opportunities are limited.

In Botswana, the Government has put in place a number of strategies that are geared towards sustainable development. These include strategies in the National Development Plans including the current NDP 8, National Conservation Strategy, Agenda 21 Implementation Plan, Community-Based Development Strategy for Rural Development and Community-Based Natural Resources Management Programme.

There are five broad issues covered in NDP 8, namely, economic diversification, employment creation, poverty eradication, population policy and rural development.

The plans and strategies meant to improve the standard of living by creation of employment opportunities and income generation are Financial Assistance Policy (FAP), Arable Lands Development Programme (ALDEP), and Labour-Based Drought Relief programmes. Between 1982 and 1996, FAP projects created 10,000 jobs in manufacturing and 2,500 jobs in non-traditional agriculture, accounting for 40 per cent of total employment in these areas.

The National Conservation Strategy which was set up in 1990 by an Act of Parliament calls for a comprehensive evaluation of all the economic, social and environmental implications of policies, programmes and projects before they are undertaken, to foster sustainable development. The Strategy also requires that all the sectoral Ministries, Departments, Local Authorities, Parastatals, etc. should in the course of their work show due regard for the conservation and enhancement of the environment in the interest of achieving sustainable development.

In line with principles 16 and 17 of Agenda 21, Botswana has a National Policy on Natural Resources Conservation and Development which calls for a comprehensive evaluation of all the economic, social and environmental implications of major policies, programmes and projects before they are implemented, to foster sustainable development.

The internalization of environmental costs in economic decision-making helps bring a system-wide perspective, a long-term view which underscores prevention, and a package of ecological practices that reinforce socio-economic development. Currently, the system of Environmental Impact Assessment is being legislated for and is intended to provide for the concept of Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The concept of the Strategic Environmental Assessment has been applied to the NDP 8 through an "Environment Audit" which identified, described and assessed the potential beneficial and adverse environmental consequences of the plan. The audit also identified possible measures to enhance the environmental benefits or to reduce or eliminate environmental disadvantages of the proposed actions and provided information to planners, decision makers, affected communities and other interested parties regarding the full range of environmental consequences of the development planning and implementation options.

In order to foster the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources and promote rural development through community participation as well as expand rural economic activities and reduce poverty, the Government of Botswana developed Community-Based Natural Resources Management Policy (CBNRMP) and Community-Based Strategy for Rural Development (CBSRD). The main objective of the CBNRMP is to promote and diversify economic development in the rural areas through the sustainable use of natural resources while the objective of the CBSRD is to introduce a more effective and sustainable approach to rural development by substantially increasing the role of community participation and community leadership structures in identifying their own economic needs and aspirations as well as formulating and implementing their own actions to address these.

As stated in the National Development Plan, sustainable use of natural resources for sustainable economic diversification has been and continues to be a national development objective. It is to this end that even before the Rio summit, Botswana had plans and strategies to combat desertification. These are found in the sectoral Ministries and include Agricultural Resources Board, Tribal Grazing Land Policy, Arable Lands Development Programme, Forestry, Energy, Education, Trade, Poverty eradication and National Settlement Policy.

The Agricultural Resources Board has in place several legislations to control bush fires and over-harvesting of natural resources. However, due in some cases to the dearth of baseline data, these legislations have not been effected.

In 1975, an integrated approach to planning and management of land resources was started to implement the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP). The policy enabled individuals or groups exclusive use of land. The hope was that individual tenure would ensure sustainable use of rangeland resources. To facilitate the implementation of the policy, appropriate planning and management systems such as Land Use Planning Groups were established at district level. At a national level, a Land Development Committee was established to coordinate national land use planning.

During the implementation of the TGLP, Government realized that there were deficiencies in the data or information on which to base planning and management decisions. This resulted in the hatching out of several initiatives particularly by the Ministry of Agriculture to map soils and develop land evaluation methodologies, which assisted in the determination of land suitability.

Arable Lands Development Programme (ALDEP) was conceived in 1977 to tackle the problem of low productivity in arable agriculture, resulting from low-yielding traditional farming practices, low farm income, low employment levels and lack of necessary draught power to timely do ploughing and planting. The programme is focused on smallholder farmers, especially the poorest. Its objectives are to increase arable production with a view to reducing the food grain deficit and achieving food security in the long run; enhance rural development and welfare by raising arable incomes through improved agricultural productivity and to improve income distribution by concentrating on smallholder farmers; and create productive and remunerative employment in the rural areas in order to absorb the rural-underemployment migration.

In 1996, about 39,541 farming households out of the targeted 44,000 had benefited from the programme. Although there is a dearth of information to support the contribution of ALDEP towards poverty alleviation, changes in rural social relationships indicate the ALDEP has elevated the socio-economic status of the poor and empowered them to have control of their production activities.

The Ministry of Agriculture, in collaboration with private sector initiatives, is responsible for ensuring that forest resources are developed, protected, conserved, and used sustainably to meet national demands for food, fodder, fuelwood and poles, employment creation and environmental protection. Forest inventories have been completed for the gazetted forest including the associated Sustainable Multiple Use Management Plan for that resource. The plan recommends the review of the National Forest Policy and Legislation and the valuation of the forest resource. To promote indigenous tree seedlings production and distribution to support national tree planting and woodlots, a National Tree Seed Centre Network linking Botswana to similar institutions in the Southern African Region has been constructed.

Net energy supply in Botswana shows that fuelwood accounts for 69.4 per cent, petroleum 19.2 per cent, coal 5.6 per cent, electricity 5.8 per cent, and solar energy 0.01 per cent. Of this, the rural population which accounts for 75 per cent of the 1.4 million people uses mainly fuelwood and paraffin and only 3 per cent of them uses electricity. Consequently, the availability of fuelwood has now reached a critical level in certain areas in the eastern Botswana.

The people most vulnerable to this shortage are generally those in the lower income bracket who are unable to purchase fuelwood and do not have the means by which fuelwood can be collected from areas beyond walking distance nor the means to purchase other fuel supplies such as paraffin, LPG gas or electricity where available. It is in view of this that the fuelwood (bio-energy) needs assessment, availability, trade, and its environmental impact assessment will be evaluated and proper programmes and projects to address these concerns developed and implemented. The Ministry of Agriculture will take the lead role and responsibility for biomass activities; however, the implementation will be shared with the Energy Affairs Division, NIR, Rural Industries Innovation Centre (RIIC), FAB and NCSA.

In line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Government of Botswana undertook a process in 1993 to review the education system. The process takes note of the environmental problems defined in the National Policy on Natural Resources Conservation and Development. The educational review process among other things is meant to enhance the environmental component of the school syllabuses. It is recognized that for children to appreciate the national and international efforts towards environmental management they ought to be educated on the same, made to participate in environmental activities and be moulded into the befitting custodians of the natural resources in the future. To this end, the UNDP has financed the Government of Botswana to design a National Environmental Education Strategy, which will form a basis for the environmental education action plan. The Environmental Education Strategy acknowledges that young people represent an important target group and should be regarded as a distinct and influential force in promoting environmental awareness.

For Botswana to develop its economy, it is important that trade policies should take into account environmental concerns. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has already taken measures to address some of the concerns. As a result of efforts of the Ministry, Botswana is a contracting member of the World Trade Organization, which is responsible for removal of all trade barriers and is also addressing environmental issues.

The Government of Botswana has put in place many policies and programmes aimed at poverty alleviation and these are implemented by different sectors at the national and district levels. Specific programmes aimed at enabling the poor to achieve sustainable livelihoods by improving access to resources include targeted schemes such as the Financial Assistance Policy - for income-generating projects which create employment, Arable Lands Development Programme - which assist resource-poor farmers to produce at subsistence level and raise income, and the Labour Intensive Public Works programmes - to relieve unemployment.

With the financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNSO), Botswana initiated the National Action Programme at the beginning of 1997.

The Ministry of Agriculture was identified as the National Focal Point for the Convention. Due to the breadth of issues to be addressed by the NAP process, a multisectoral Task Force which includes the NGOs was established to guide and support the National Focal Point.

With the assistance of the Task Force, the National Focal Point identified stakeholders who were then targeted for consultation and awareness creation.

At the beginning of the consultation process, one (1) seminar for the District Extension Teams, including NGOs, was held in Gaborone to raise their awareness about various forms of land degradation, desertification, the Convention and more importantly to assist the District Extension Teams to prepare for the awareness and consultation campaigns within their districts.

Eleven (11) seminars for community representatives were, thus, organized by the District Extension Teams in collaboration with the Task Force at the district level. Between 700 and 800 representatives of stakeholders attended these seminars.

Five (5) other seminars were held for special groups of stakeholders namely the District Authorities, Members of the House of Chiefs, Women, Youth and Media. The seminars were intended to secure the support of these important stakeholders and to identify the roles they can play in the formulation and implementation of the National Action Programme (NAP). Three (3) seminars were also held for the local NGOs to sensitize them and explore ways in which they can participate in the NAP process.

One of these seminars was held to develop networking arrangements and to identify an NGO Focal Point. The seminars generated recommendations which were tabled at the National Forum which was attended by about 180 participants including senior government officials from various ministries, NGOs, community representatives, donor agencies and some members of the private sector.

The National Forum itself identified seven priority areas of the NAP as follows:

Poverty alleviation and community empowerment, inter alia by promoting viable and sustainable alternative livelihoods, partnership building and networking between various stakeholders, capacity-building of the various stakeholders such as NGOs, etc.

Developing mechanisms for mobilizing and channelling financial resources for combating desertification, education and technology development and strengthening capacity for research, information collection, analysis and sustainable use and management of natural resources.

Two (2) regional forums were also conducted after the National Forum. These were attended by a wide range of stakeholders such as village communities, district authorities, NGOs, some MPs and Ministers. These forums were aimed at consolidating the recommendations of the various seminars into concrete programmes and creating partnerships with districts and communities through development and ownership of action plans.

In addition to efforts on consultation and awareness creation, a number of publicity activities have been undertaken. These are the production of a brochure on how to combat desertification, a video on how local people understand desertification, and a desertification Education Kit targeted at secondary schools. Three hundred (300) copies of this video have been reproduced for distribution to educational institutions and the districts. Seventy-three (73) of these videos have so far been distributed to all District Commissioners and District Officers (responsible for sub-districts), all Council Secretaries/City/Town Clerks, all Land Board Secretaries, Education Centres, and Regional Agricultural Offices. These videos will be used to support awareness creation by the recipient.

Five thousand (5,000) copies of the Desertification Education Kit have been reprinted and will soon be launched to the Ministry of Education for subsequent incorporation into the secondary schools curriculum.

Six community projects have been received and only three have been funded. These are Lehututu Natural Resource Management, Rakops Tree Planting, Masingwaneng and Matsilojoe Land Reclamation, Mokobeng and Mathathane woodlots. The three funded projects are Lehututu, Mokobeng and Rakops. These projects are at different stages of development. The rest are still being processed for funding. The National Focal Point continues to make follow-up to these community projects to support the community efforts.

It is now clear after the awareness and consultation phase that communities are interested in taking appropriate action. More attention is now being directed towards assisting those communities to formulate projects and to secure funding for them.

To strengthen the institutional framework of the NAP, a consultant was engaged to look into the possibility of establishing linkages and formulating a coordination mechanism. The consultant is yet to present the findings and recommendations to the Task Force. Arrangements are also advanced to institutionalize the NAP process. The NAP will be housed under the Soil Conservation section of the Ministry of Agriculture. Adjustments to accommodate the NAP in the National Development Plan 8 will also be made during the country's mid-term reviews.

The World Day to Combat Desertification was commemorated for the first time at Mathathane which is severely affected by desertification and drought in the eastern part of Botswana. A keynote address emphasizing drought preparedness, the use of indigenous technologies to fight desertification and adoption of alternative livelihoods was delivered by the Assistant Minister of Agriculture. This year's World Day to Combat Desertification will be commemorated for the second time in Botswana in the Kgalagadi district on 17 June 1999. This district is severely affected by land degradation. The theme of this commemoration is "Women's role in the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification". Likewise, a keynote address emphasizing drought preparedness and the use of indigenous technologies to fight desertification will be given by a dignitary.

BURKINA FASO

The present document is a summary of the report produced as a result of a long process of consultation with the major stakeholders in the field of desertification control in Burkina Faso. Drafted in pursuance of the relevant articles of the Convention and in accordance with the provisions of decisions 11/COP.1 and 5/COP.2 of the Conference of the Parties, it is designed to inform the Parties to the Convention about the measures taken to implement the CCD in Burkina Faso.

For Burkina Faso, the Convention is both a starting point and an outcome:

- A starting point because it constitutes a new approach to the problem of desertification and its causes;

- An outcome because it was necessary to make enormous efforts to create awareness and undertake concrete actions, first at the national level, to prove that desertification was not inevitable, and then at the international level, to mobilize the international community to achieve the expected results, within the framework of environmental protection and preservation.

These efforts, but also their limits, are set out below.

I. Strategies and priorities formulated in development policies

1.1. Policies and/or strategies

In Burkina Faso, the national strategies for economic and social development were set out in the various Five-year Development Plans. These plans became People's Development Programmes (PPD) during the 1980s (the revolutionary period) and were then replaced by the rolling Three-year Programmes advocated under the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

The various national strategies for economic and social development aimed at:

- Securing food self-sufficiency and security;

- Protecting and safeguarding the environment in terms of the rational and sustainable management of natural resources;

- Increasing incomes.

1.2. The Plans

Four plans were worked out:

- *The National Action Plan to Combat Desertification*, formulated in response to the regional strategy to combat desertification proposed by the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS);

- *The National Action Plan for the Environment (PANE)*: a strategic development plan devised at the urging of the World Bank, it takes into account the social and economic dimension of environmental issues and comprises five programmes;

- *The Strategic Plan for Agricultural Research (PSRA)*: adopted in October 1995, its purpose is to underpin the achievement of the socio-economic development objectives in the solution of environmental problems;

- *The Tropical Forest Action Plan (PAFT)*: initiated under the auspices of FAO, it constitutes an overall strategic framework

intended to redirect, intensify and harmonize traditional forestry policies and practices in order to lay the foundations for sustainable socio-economic development.

1.3. The programmes

The implementation of the PANE took the form of the drawing up and implementation of several programmes related to desertification control at three levels:

Agricultural development:

Two programmes were worked out:

- *The Structural Adjustment Programme for the Agricultural Sector (PASA)* aims at laying down the foundations for sustainable economic and social development in order to raise the living condition of the people in the medium term;

- *The National Programme for Land Management (PNGT)*: the land management approach has been a national option since its adoption in 1986; it is one of the basic elements of the sustainable development of the country. Initiated with technical and financial support from the World Bank, the PNGT has set seven targets, including efforts to persuade rural communities to assume responsibility for their own future and the integration of activities related to agriculture, forestry, livestock raising and fisheries into a system.

Forestry and water sector:

Four programmes were devised:

- *The National Forestry Development Programme (PNAF);*

- *The National Village Forestry Programme (PNFV);*

- *The Sahel Burkinabe Programme (PSB), a trial programme developed in 1986 in order to test the NPCD approaches;*

- *The water-related programmes (the Village and Pasture Water Supply Programme, the Water Programme for Agriculture and the Water Resources Management and Protection Programme).*

Research:

The Strategic Plan for Agricultural Research (PSRA) covers the following areas: forestry development, genetic management of ligneous plants, forest seeds, soil fertility, saving energy and renewable energies.

National components of the CILSS Regional Programmes:

The strategies devised through CILSS have favoured the design of programmes such as the Improved Stoves Programme, the Gas Promotion Programme, the Research Programme, the Programme for Environmental Training and Information (PFIE).

II. Institutional measures for the implementation of the Convention

The National Council for Environmental Management (CONAGESE) is a structure set up under the law establishing the Environment Code which was adopted in January 1997. This forum for coordination enables environmental considerations to be integrated in the economic, social and cultural development process. It is composed of two bodies:

- The Conference of CONAGESE, which can set up specialized committees;
- The Permanent Secretariat of CONAGESE, established in September 1995 within the Ministry of Environment and Water.

2.1. Operational National Coordinating Body (NCB)

Legal status:

In response to the stipulations and wishes of the Convention the Government appointed the Permanent Secretariat of CONAGESE (SP/CONAGESE) as the National Coordinating Body (NCB). A National Steering Committee (CNP) was established by inter-ministerial decree pending the setting up of the specialized committees.

Resources:

Two types of resources are available to the Permanent Secretariat of CONAGESE: support from the Government under the State budget and support from the bilateral or multilateral cooperation partners through specific projects.

As regards the State budget, at the time the present report was prepared, the support consisted of the provision to the Permanent Secretariat of 15 planners, five support staff, two administrative buildings, office equipment and supplies and the payment of running costs to an estimated total of US$ 240,000 (salaries, annual rental value of premises, equipment and running costs).

As regards the cooperation partners, the contribution to the running of the Permanent Secretariat takes the form of institutional support projects presented in the table below:

No.	Project title	Starting date	Duration	Cost (dollars)	Sponsors
1	*Project being implemented National Strategy and Plan of Action in the area of biological diversity and country report to the Conference of the Parties	01/1998	1 year	230 977	GEF/UNDP
2	Desertification control measures	1997	5 years	1 330 000	JALDA/JAPAN
3	Sahel Burkinabe Programme	09/1997	3 years	12 000 000	GTZ
4	Project for support to the Sahel Burkinabe Programme	11/1997	5 years	4 872 214	UNDP/UNCDF/GVT
5	Empowering Burkina Faso to formulate its first national communication on climatic changes	01/1998	2 years	233 810	UNDP/GEF
6	Project "Support for the process of the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification" (NAP/CD)	01/1998	2 years	1 383 774 480 000 200 000 4 000 34 500 67 740 45 000 112 800 371 500 9 214 60 000	 GVT IFAD CILSS SE/CCD Netherlands CIDA IDRC UNDP France Denmark
7	Project "Institutional support for SP/CONAGESE Phase III"	12/1998	1 year	117 073	Denmark GVT
8	Transitional phase of the project "Environmental legislation and institutions in Africa"	03/1999	6 months	76 000	Netherlands
9	*Project being negotiated Project for institutional support to the CONAGESE Permanent Secretariat for private sector capacity-building in the area of environment and environmental documentation centre	09/1998	3 years	678 000	Belgium GVT
10	Drafting of the initial communication of Burkina Faso on the implementation of the Framework Convention on Climatic Change	06/1999	2 years	272 000	Denmark GVT

Intersectoral and pluridisciplinary character: composition and mode of operation

The Permanent Secretariat of CONAGESE is essentially led by eight forestry executives. Expertise also comes from other Ministries such as those of Agriculture (2), Water (2), Livestock-raising (2), Communication (1). Thus the Secretariat can draw on skills in Environmental Law, Environment and Development, Women and Development, Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock-raising, Health Engineering, Water and Sanitation, Diplomacy and International Law, Environmental Impact Studies, Environmental Education.

Status of data and information

The Permanent Secretariat of CONAGESE, through its environmental policy and planning division, guides and coordinates the activities of the National Programme for the Management of Environmental Information (PNGIM).

This programme cooperates with a network of 15 partner institutions which produce and/or use environmental information. Their achievements include the National Nomenclature for the production of land use maps, Topographic Databases, databases of localities in Burkina, inventories of classified forests, etc.

2.2. Institutional, legislative and regulatory framework for desertification control, coherent

The process of analysing the institutional and legislative frameworks for desertification control in Burkina Faso dates back to 1990 with the holding of the workshop on evaluation of the implementation of the National Desertification Control Programme (PNLCD). This workshop helped to clarify the quantitative and qualitative aspect of the concept of environment, to view more clearly the measures aimed at giving producers more secure access to natural resources and finally to highlight the need for the country to set up a programme of institutional and legislative capacity-building in the field of the environment.

These various strategic orientations led to practical measures at two levels:

Institutional level:

These practical measures relate to:

- *The start of a decentralization process;*
- *Spelling out the tasks of the Ministry of the Environment;*
- *Establishment of the National Council for Environmental Management (CONAGESE);*

- *Establishment or installation of specific structures for the implementation of the Convention (National Steering Committee and specialized machinery, machinery for coordination with NGOs and cooperation partners).*

Legislative and regulatory level:

A programme for the drafting and/or revision of a number of legislative texts relating to natural resources management was instituted with a view to giving producers more secure access to them.

- *The law instituting agrarian and land reform;*
- *The law establishing the Environment Code, adopted on 30 January 1997;*
- *The Forestry Code, adopted on 31 January 1997;*
- *The Mining Code;*
- *The Water Code, which is being prepared;*
- *The Grazing Code, which is being prepared.*

2.3. National Plan of Action integrated in the National Plan for Economic and Social Development

The Burkina National Action Plan document was in the form of a preliminary draft when this report was written. This preliminary draft is to be validated in project form during the second session of the National Forum scheduled from 28 June to 1 July 1999.

- *The harmonization of the NAP with the other strategic frameworks;*
- *The articulation of the NAP with the national, regional and local approaches;*
- *The articulation of the NAP with the PASR for West Africa.*

III. The participatory process in support of the process of the implementation of the NAP (see table on page IV)

The process of implementation of the Convention in Burkina Faso was divided into three phases:

- *The setting up of a mechanism for partnership between the various stakeholders;*
- *The drafting and adoption of the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification;*
- *The implementation of the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification.*

In view of their specific objectives, an implementation strategy was drawn up for each of the three phases. Concerning the process of participation by the various stakeholders, the strategy documents prepared as part of the implementation of the first and second phases (phases covered by the present report) provided for two types of activity:

- *Information and awareness creation activities based on a communication strategy;*

- *Coordination with the stakeholders in two forms: for each category of stakeholder at the national level and in a decentralized manner at the village, department, province, region and national levels.*

IV. Process of consultation with cooperation partners (developed country parties)

(see table No. 1 attached)

V. Measures taken or planned to improve the economic environment, the institutional framework and knowledge of the phenomenon of desertification

These measures took the form of:

- Evaluation of the actions taken in the past and compilation of an inventory of ongoing projects;

- Capacity-building: the major role of the NAP is to encourage, promote and stimulate the process of participatory and decentralized planning, i.e., the process of preparation of Local Development Programmes (LDPs).

In addition to these measures, five national desertification control capacity-building projects are being implemented or negotiated with the technical and financial cooperation partners. Finally, measures are being taken to improve the economic environment and knowledge of the phenomenon of desertification through two thematic studies on the state of desertification and natural resources and the state of poverty and the behaviour of populations towards natural resources.

VI. Financial resources allocated to support the implementation of the Convention

In addition to existing funds, a special fund to support the implementation of the Convention was established with the backing of Canada. On the basis of this experience, a National Fund for Desertification Control was set up.

VII. Review and evaluation of the benchmarks and indicators used to measure the progress made

A research and action group on monitoring and evaluation was set up as part of the implementation of the Convention to assist the NCB to define and/or adapt the tools for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and impact of the activities carried out or planned as part of the NPA/CD.

With the assistance of CILSS and OSS, this group organized a workshop to evaluate the NAP process in June 1998. The tools used were those of the grid of indicators for the implementation of the CCD. The group is continuing its work on the development of impact indicators with the assistance of CILSS and OSS.

CAMEROON

I. Introduction

Part of the territory of Cameroon in the Sudano-Sahelian zone faces drought with its adverse impacts on the environment.

Elsewhere in the country, it takes the form of a severe lack of rainfall, with consequences which are no less severe since the colonial era. Cameroon has made efforts to combat drought and desertification one of its areas of focus.

Its concerns in this area have progressively been translated into action in the economic and social development plans and in projects using variable methodological approaches depending on ecological fashion:

- The approach in the 1977 United Nations Plan emphasizing the integration of the desertification control dimension in projects starting with the Maroua seminar in 1988

- The Rio 1992 approach in Agenda 21 emphasizing the integration of environmental and sustainable development consideration in the National Plan for Environmental Management (PNGE)

In pursuance of decision 11/COP.1 adopted at the first Conference of the Parties to the above-mentioned Convention, inviting African member countries to provide information to the forthcoming COP 3 through a national report on progress made in drawing up the plan of action on the implementation of this Convention, Cameroon embarked on the preparation of the present document, which, in the fields of planning and strategy - biodiversity - environment - institutional and legal framework - identifies achievements and difficulties encountered throughout the process and emphasizes the future prospects.

The preparation of this document involved a nucleus of five (5) multidisciplinary experts around the focal point with contributions from four (4) national consultants from the ministerial and academic institutions with technical assistance from the consultant expert from the

Convention secretariat on efforts to combat desertification. It is subject to validation by a seminar-workshop gathering together 22 resource persons and experts.

II. Status of the process of development of efforts to combat desertification in Cameroon before and after ratification of the Convention on the subject: principal achievements, difficulties encountered and solutions or prospects

2.1 Strategies and Plans

2.1.1 Strategies in existing national plans in the other socio-economic fields

(a) Achievements

Following its accession to independence (1961-1991) Cameroon founded its development policy on the system of five-year plans based on the approach in the 1977 United Nations Plan, emphasizing the following environmental orientations:

- Vth Plan (1982-1991) and VIth Plan (1986-1991): reflection on the state of the environment in the field of the negative effects of desertification (industrial pollution, impacts on the ecology of the rural environment, over-exploitation of land, silvo-agro-pastoral imbalance) by means of the preparation of a general inventory of those areas

- PNGE (1996) and the National Forest Action Plan (PAFN) (1993): diagnosis of environmental considerations and setting of overall objectives together with several project sheets and a basic legal provision in the environmental laws of 1996 and the forestry law of 1994 with a view to bringing desertification under control in the northern part and halting its advance towards the humid zone in southern Cameroon

- Under the project "Drawing up of the Environment Code of Cameroon" (March 1997 interministerial report): scientific and legal norms to be collected or developed in the desertification sector in pursuance of the relevant convention

(b) Difficulties or problems encountered

- Poor guidance concerning efforts to combat desertification in the various existing plans as a result of the lack of coordinated assistance from the donors

- Belated refusal of Cameroon's application to join CILSS following ratification of the CCD on the grounds that it did not fully fall within the Sudano-Sahelian zone, delaying Cameroon's dealings with the Executive Bureau of CCD and slowing down the process

- Projects for the application of the guidelines which are isolated and not properly coordinated because of the lack of a defined institutional framework in the PNGE and the PAFN and in the earlier plans

(c) Solutions

In order to have clear and consistent guidelines and implementation projects which are in keeping with national concerns and meet the conditions laid down by donors, specifically COP 3:

- Prepare the present report on progress with the process of drawing up of the NAP and lodge it with the CCD secretariat for COP 3

- Draw up the terms of reference of the NAP on the basis of the recommendations of COP 3 and secure funds to draw up the NAP and the feasible effective projects against drought in Cameroon

2.1.2 Strategy of the plans in efforts to combat desertification in various fields

2.1.2.1 Biodiversity

2.1.2.1.1 Forests

(a) Achievements

- Legislation on existing forests from the colonial era to 1994. Plans, programmes and projects for regeneration and reforestation from the time of independence up to the economic crisis and the SAP

- National Seminar in Maroua on desertification in 1988, strict recommendations on the need to draw up a national action plan on desertification incorporating environmental preoccupations (1997 United Nations Plan approach)

- PNGE and environmental law including guidelines on desertification in the spirit of the CCD

- Bodies for applying forestry policy in existence from 1970 to the present

(b) Difficulties

- Economic slowdown or near-halt to plans, programmes and projects as a result of the economic crisis and SAP constraints

- Failure to take account of the social (human) factor

- High cost and poor follow-up of reforestation

- Poor exploitation of plantations

- Species selected for reforestation are of no interest to the local populations and are regarded as belonging to others (the State and ecologists)

- Lack of a zoning plan in the northern part of Cameroon which would enable management initiatives in the field to be better oriented

(c) Solutions

- Initiation of thinking on the incompatibility of the forestry and agroforestry plans (PAFN and NPA) and the SAP, which have divergent aims: conservation/development and restriction of development

- Redefinition of the orientations and objectives of the projects included in the PAFN

- Implementation of the programmes of activities set out under the special forest development fund, which provides for new plantings of 1,000 hectares a year

2.1.2.1.2 Fauna

(a) Achievements

- Existence of a colonial administration on fauna (cf. establishment of the national parks)

- Existence of the different plans and instruments governing fauna and the commercial sector

- Development of pastureland through a participatory approach process, with involvement of local people

- Education and awareness creation among local people as regards fauna

- Development of veterinary medicine

- Diversification of traditional administrative services, NGOs, projects (GEF), parastatal companies (SODEPA)

- Development of hunting zones - Special Fund for the Development of Fauna which has become operational

(b) Problems

- Low level of support by local people for the policy of sound management of fauna

- Difficulty in changing the habits of livestock raisers concerning rangeland development

- Inconsistent existing projects

- Level of education among local people incompatible with the management initiatives

- Livestock raisers very hard to reach

- Lack of water obliging herds to travel long distances, thereby causing disruptions in ecosystems

- High cost of ranch construction

(c) Solutions

- Effective participation by local people

- Financing ranch construction work

- Awareness creation among local people

- Promotion of literacy among livestock raisers to make it easier to convey the principles of rangeland management

2.1.2.1.3 Agriculture, livestock raising, fisheries

(a) Achievements

The agricultural sector, which is crucial in the Cameroonian economy, has recorded the following achievements:

- Several agricultural programmes in the various five-year plans

- A multitude of technical skills

- Availability of arable land

- Traditional administrative structures for research, NGOs, GICs, development corporations

- Positive attitude of the population and availability of labour

- Existence of a favourable legal framework

- New agricultural policy based on general liberalization, stimulating an increase in output

(b) Problems

- Difficulties in preserving foodstuffs because of a long dry season

- Limited farming activity because of a short rainy season

- Leaf-eating locusts, migratory birds and pachyderms invade agricultural plantations

- Lack of coordination of projects in the guidance to farmers

- Delay and lack of sustained funding of projects and limited cultivated areas because of the economic crisis and constraints stemming from the SAP

- Lack of and/or poor evaluation of projects carried out

- Inadequate guidance to farming populations

- Lack of impact studies for most projects

- Low incomes of local people

(c) Solutions

- Incorporation of the "management and sustainable conservation of natural resources" dimension

- Develop techniques for the conservation of appropriate foodstuffs and low-season crops

- Intensify efforts to combat various crop infestations

- Institute proper project coordination

- Strengthen managerial capabilities

- Comply with project funding deadlines

- Evaluate each project on completion

- Strengthen guidance for farming populations

- Facilitate access to agricultural credit

- Initiate a review of the incompatibility of SAP constraints with the natural resources conservation plans (PAFN)

2.1.2.2 Environment

2.1.2.2.1 Water

(a) Achievements

The various plans include guidelines which prompt a variety of projects that incorporate a desertification control component:

- Underground Water Project in the northern region (resource inventory, economic feasibility of resource mobilization) 1975

- FSAR.1. and FSAR.2 project

- Boreholes (Government + BM)

- Borehole and well-drilling projects (Government + Islamic Development Bank)

- Dam project in Mont Mandara (about 10)

- Boreholes and wells by NGOs, CARE Cameroun and OCSD (Organisation Canadienne pour la solidarité du développement).

- Diocésain pour le développement (CDD) of Maroua for wells and canals (artificial recharge of surface water)

- Hydro-agricultural dam at Maga

- Hydroelectric and agricultural dam at Lagdo

- Retention dam to supply the urban centres and in the Mayo Oulo

(b) Difficulties encountered throughout the process

- Poor quality of plans and programmes for the geographical distribution of the initiatives to combat desertification, failure to finalize project financing because of donors' budgetary constraints

- Low involvement of local people in project design and follow-up

- Inappropriate institutional frameworks

(c) Solutions

- Develop an integrated approach to water resource use (agriculture, stock-raising, etc.)

- Develop a participatory approach with the local people as target No. 1

- Ensure the best possible water management

- Conduct an exhaustive study of potentialities

- Develop local capabilities, notably in technical matters

- Protection and restoration of soils, anti-erosion techniques and crop techniques in agroforestry

- Training of local people in water resources management

2.1.2.2.2 Climate

In the field of management of the phenomenon of climate, Cameroon's achievements are as follows:

- establishment of a national meteorological network since the German colonial era on climate
- establishment of research facilities on climate in the universities and in the research facilities
- Account has been taken of these two previous operations in the development projects
- Cameroon's membership of the organizations, signing of the international legal instruments
- Existence of three major State theses on the climates of Cameroon and various dissertations
- Implementation of a research project on estimating precipitation using satellites

(b) Problems encountered

- Deterioration of the network of meteorological observations
- Abolition of certain research facilities as a result of the economic crisis
- Lack of enthusiasm and motivation as a result of the economic crisis on the part of the staff of the meteorological services
- Lack of consistency in following up research activities and lack of national coordination machinery
- Poor dissemination of results
- Poor archiving of data
- Climatological concerns are ignored in development projects

(c) Solutions

- Organize a national weather watch
- Provide the ministries responsible for handling climatic and environmental problems with adequate resources to observe and study the climate
- Encourage research in the area

- Possess modern data archives and a computerized data management system

- Regularly disseminate the results of data analysis

- Devise methods for evaluating the impacts of climate and climate trends on various socio-economic activities

- Identify sectors vulnerable to climate variations

- Undertake comprehensive activities relating to drought and desertification

2.1.2.2.3 Energy, Health, Education, Trade, Economic Planning, Energy

(a) Achievements

In the field of efforts to combat desertification, several achievements exist in the area of the planning and use of national energy resources. Several projects and programmes have been drawn up and implemented with a view to the protection of plant cover and the use of the region's energy potential. These projects and programmes concern in particular:

The use of biomass through the transfer of the surplus which exists in the forest region in the south of the country to the northern region, in order to preserve plant cover; research and development and the promotion of improved stoves with the aim of optimizing the use of biomass; the development and promotion of alternative energies: specifically wind and solar energy, which offer considerable potential in this region threatened by desertification.

(b) Difficulties

The difficulties encountered include, among others, a disorganized biomass subsector in the context of the local shortage of this resource; inadequate promotion of hydroelectric, solar and wind energy together with inadequate awareness and participation on the part of the populations concerned.

(c) Solutions

- Incorporate in plans and projects the components of public health and education promotion and trade as alternatives which will stimulate efforts to combat desertification

2.1.2.3 Institutional and legal framework

2.1.2.3.1 Institutional framework

2.1.2.3.1.1 Categories of socio-institutional actors

- Existence of institutions which were originally limited and progressively proliferated and became operational to handle efforts to combat desertification from the colonial era to the present day

2.1.2.3.1.2 CCD coordinating body

(a) Achievements

- Before the convention, coordination was handled by certain institutions (Ministry of Planning) then transferred to the Ministry of the Environment and Forests

- Following ratification of the convention, establishment of a Focal Point in MINEF to coordinate the implementation of efforts to combat desertification

- Provision for desertification control in the MINEF (SPE) organizational chart in 1998

(b) Problems

- Lack of an element relating to study on the analysis of the institutional framework on efforts to combat desertification in the PNGE as in other priority sectors of the plan of which the implementation of the convention in question forms part with provision for a separate national action plan

- Delay in acquiring resources and the start-up of the Focal Point

- Lack of a dossier on this subject (terms of reference) to persuade donors

- Failure to translate the recommendations of the Maroua seminar into a bankable project to take advantage of the benefits offered by the CCD

- Waste of time in the negotiations on Cameroon's application to join CILSS, which was finally turned down on the grounds of its status as a semi-desert country (with more forests than deserts)

(c) Solutions

- Study and analyse the existing institutional framework and determine its harmonization to follow-up efforts to combat desertification as is done in the PNGE in relation to the other sectors

- Rapidly provide the focal point with facilities (strengthening of institutional capabilities) in order to embark on the preparation of the NAP

- Central African subregional integration as regards efforts to combat desertification, in order to take advantage of the benefits offered by the regional programmes

2.1.2.4 Legislative and regulatory framework

2.1.2.4.1 Laws

(a) Achievements

Existence of an environment law including a fundamental provision on efforts to combat desertification, as well as other laws covering the related sectors (Agriculture, Forests, Water, Energy, etc.), several international conventions and agreements on gifts since 1994 on efforts to combat desertification reflected in laws and regulations (drought, biodiversity, climate).

2.1.2.4.2 Regulations, provisions for implementing laws and organizational charts

(a) Achievements

In this context:

- provision for the drawing up of a decree to apply the environmental law with regard to efforts to combat desertification under way in the framework of the Environment Code Preparation Project, as a priority activity connected to the application of the convention in question

- an arsenal of regulations governing the separate projects and institutions, from the five-year development plans of the 1960s to the new environmental framework (PNGE)

(b) Problems associated with laws and regulations

All the existing texts have remained on paper, with little or no practical effect, as a result of the economic crisis and the SAP constraints which are incompatible with the various conservation plans (PAPN, PNGE), and potentially the national action plan (NAP) to combat desertification, rigid conditionalities of the lending agencies concerning the establishment of the MINEF machinery entrusted with the environment including efforts to combat desertification, which have for a long time delayed the application of the convention on desertification.

(c) Solutions

Implementation of the project for the drawing up of the Environment Code (instrument for application, framework law on environmental management, desertification control dimension, with the rapid assistance of the donors one of which has already been secured (UNDP and UNSO) and others identified by sector.

Organization of a forum on efforts to combat desertification to discuss the problems of the incompatibility of the various plans for environmental management with the SAP.

2.1.3 Methodological approach to the development of the technical programmes and functional projects, past and/or current

2.1.3.1 Diagnostic method for past experience

(a) Achievements

For the drawing up of its five-year development plans, Cameroon set up committees composed of multidisciplinary resource persons supported by external technical assistance where necessary.

(b) Problems

Public participation in the process was limited to the views of deputies or the members of the assemblies representing the public in question.

(c) Solutions

Cameroon adapted very quickly to the participatory approach (seminar/workshop for coordination broadened to include the private sector) and will endeavour to make this achievement a permanent feature during the drawing up of its NAP.

2.1.3.2 Method for recording, adapting and integrating projects under way in the NAP process

For the development of its plans and programmes, the method of data collection and analysis used to date by Cameroon is:

- the exploitation of the macro-economic aggregates developed by the national statistical and national accounts services;
- use of national and international consultants;
- exploitation of the national, foreign and private databases.

III. Prospects for the national action plan to combat desertification in Cameroon after the third Conference of the parties and submission of the present report

3.1 Support from donors and subregional cooperation

3.1.1 Support from donors

(a) Achievements

- The United Nations Office UNSO contributed to the Maroua seminar in 1988 on desertification;
- UNDP concluded a memorandum of agreement in 1998 and a gift agreement on the preparation of the NAP in Cameroon.

- Cameroon is a member of the subregional organizations (CBLT, CDEAC, CEMAC) with the immediate neighbours with which it shares this ecological scourge of drought (Chad, CAR, Nigeria, Gabon, Republic of Congo)

(b) Problems

Rejection of Cameroon's application to join CILSS to share the benefits of the subregional programmes in the context of the experiment (CILSS/ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC, UMA indicated in the drafting guide).

(c) Solution

As proposed by the CCD COP 1, Cameroon plans to exploit the opportunity offered to consult its neighbours which are members of CEMAC and which are often represented in the COP of the CCD to encourage the integration of the desertification control dimension in the subregional programmes of that institution, so as to enable the States to benefit from the advantages of the member States. The States of the forest zone should curb the advance of the desert through conservation and sustainable forest management.

3.1.2 Subregional cooperation

(a) Achievements

Cameroon is a party to the Convention and is entitled to the benefits associated with the Convention's objectives set out in article 1 to secure control over this phenomenon in its three northern provinces which have been hard hit by the drought.

IV. Conclusion and recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

In the light of the above, it may be concluded that:

- Cameroon embarked on the drafting of its plan of action to combat desertification well before the Convention in its development plans and in the environmental management and forestry action plans including a desertification control component

- By drawing on the ecological approach, by using the methodological approaches, the resources and the assistance appropriate to each period

- The approaches or strategies and the areas demanded by the Convention in article 1 were not, it is true, taken into account for lack of the drafting guide for national reports which had only just been published

- Starting with the submission of the present report to the CCD secretariat for COP 3 and after its validation by the national workshop in mid-June 1999, Cameroon will embark on the preparation of its NAP with all the assistance that could be wished from the international and subregional community

4.2 Recommendations

- The solutions proposed above for each difficulty are to be taken into account by the CCD secretariat as integral parts of Cameroon future prospects in its commitment to draw up its NAP.

- To consider without delay the final report on the actions and activities on:

  - the presentation of the Cameroonian NAP to its subregional bilateral partners and donors in a forum for national coordination and its need for support (strengthening of the institutional capabilities of the Coordinating Unit)

  - as well as the activities related to the above-mentioned actions: organization of the national forum together with the UNSO Office and the CCD secretariat

  - preparation of the terms of reference of the NAP

- Participation by the Cameroonian delegation in COP 3

- To consider these actions and programmes as priority objectives for Cameroon